

Message Text

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PAGE 01 JERUSA 00002 272015Z

ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W

-----054158 272020Z /41

O 271912Z FEB 78

FM AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 349

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T SECITON 2 OF 6 JERUSALEM 558

EXDIS HANDLE AS NODIS

FROM ATHERTON

2. MEETING LASTED APPROXIMATELY TWO HOURS. ON OUR SIDE WERE LEWIS, STERNER, KORN, SHERMAN, AND MYSELF. ON ISRAELI SIDE, IN ADDITION TO BEGIN, WERE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER YADIN, FOREIGN MINISTER DAYAN, DEFENSE MINISTER WEIZMAN, ATTORNEY GENERAL BARAK, ROSANNE, RUBENSTEIN, AND AVNER OF PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE. BEGIN WAS IN GOOD SPIRITS BUT SEEMED A BIT MORE SERIOUS AND SUBDUED THAN DURING OUR LAST MEETING. BEFORE MEETING OF THE LARGE GROUP BEGAN, I HAD A FEW MINUTES ASIDE WITH BEGIN DURING WHICH I TOLD HIM IN CONFIDENCE THAT WE HAD NOT YET RECEIVED SADAT'S MESSAGE AND WERE UNCERTAIN EXACTLY WHEN IT WOULD BE COMING. I SAID WE PROBABLY COULD NOT EXPECT IT BEFORE MY RETURN TO ISRAEL MARCH 2 FROM CAIRO. I CAUTIONED HIM AGAINST EXPECTING IT WOULD CONTAIN ANY NEW PROPOSALS DIRECTLY AFFECTING PRESENT NEGOTIATIONS; IT WAS LARGELY A REFLECTION OF SADAT'S PRESENT MOOD. BEGIN SAID HE THOUGHT FACT SADAT WANTED SEND HIM A MESSAGE WAS A GOOD SIGN; HE WOULD RESPOND AND COMMUNICATION WOULD BE REESTABLISHED BETWEEN THEM.

3. I OPENED BY GIVING BEGIN A RUNDOWN ON MY MEETING

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WITH PRESIDENT SADAT POINTING OUT THAT I HAD ALREADY GIVEN DAYAN THE FLAVOR OF THE SADAT CONVERSATION ALONG WITH A COPY OF THE EGYPTIAN COUNTER-PROPOSALS FOR THE DRAFT RESOLUTION. I SAID THE MEETING WITH SADAT HAD BEEN LONG AND THAT HE HAD DONE MOST OF THE TALKING DESPITE THE FACT HE WAS NOT FEELING WELL AND WAS JUST RECOVERING FROM A BAD COLD. I EXPLAINED THAT A MEETING

WITH SADAT HAD ORIGINALLY NOT BEEN PLANNED, BUT SADAT TOLD ME THAT HE HAD NOT WANTED ME TO LEAVE EGYPT WITHOUT A MEETING SINCE THAT MIGHT GIVE RISE TO SPECULATION AND TO MISINTERPRETATION. SADAT REITERATED HIS DESIRE TO CONTINUE THE PEACE PROCESS AND TO COOPERATE IN EVERY WAY POSSIBLE WITH MY MISSION,. HE CONFIRMED FOREIGN MINISTER KAMEL'S STATEMENT TO ME THAT EGYPT VERY MUCH WANTS TO COMPLETE THE DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES.

4. I SAID I THOUGHT I COULD BEST DESCRIBE SADAT'S MOOD AS ONE OF FRUSTRATION. AS DURING HIS WASHINGTON VISIT, HE WAS CONCERNED THAT THE DIALOGUE BETWEEN HIM AND ISRAEL WAS DEALING WITH WORDS AND PROCEDURES, NOT SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES. HE REPEATED OVER AND OVER AGAIN THAT THE SPIRIT OF HIS VISIT TO JERUSALEM HAD STILL NOT BEEN UNDERSTOOD IN ISRAEL. BY THIS, HE DID NOT MEAN THAT HE DOESNOT WANT TO CONTINUE NEGOTIATING OVER THE LANGUAGE OF THE DECLARATION BUT HE FEELS THAT THE NEGOTIATIONS ARE TOO DETAILED. SADAT EMPHASIZED THAT HE WANTED TO ESTABLISH GOOD NEIGHBORLY RELATIONSHIPS WITH ISRAEL. HE SAID HE WANTED AN OVERALL AGREEMENT WITH ISRAEL THAT WOULD SET A PATTERN FOR THE WHOLE AREA. ANOTHER OF SADAT'S THEMES, I SAID, WAS THE RECOGNITION OF ISRAEL'S NEED FOR SECURITY. HOWEVER, HE COUPLED THIS WITH THE INSISTANCE THAT SECURITY COULD NOT BE AT THE XPENSE OF LAND OR SOVERIGNTY. SADAT ALSO SPOKE OF HIS UNDER-
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STANDING OF THE NEED FOR INTERIM ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE WEST BANK AND GAZA AND HIS WILLINGNESS TO COOPERATE IN ANY WAY NECESSARY TO ASSURE THAT ISRAEL WOULD FEEL SECURE. I NOTED THAT SADAT IS THINKING OF A REFERENDUM AT THE END OF THE TRANSITIONAL PERIOD. BEGIN ASKED IF I MEANT A REFERENDUM IN JUDEA AND SAMARIA. I SAID YES, BUT THE REFERENDUM WOULD BE DESIGNED TO ESTABLISH LINKS BETWEEN JORDAN AND THE WEST BANK. SADAT IS NOT TALKING ABOUT INDEPENDANCE FOR THE WEST BANK, AND HAS NOT DONE SO FOR SOME TIME. SADAT ALSO STRESSED THAT HE IS IN NO WAY CONCERNED OVER THE ATTACKS ON HIM BY THE REJECTIONISTS. HE SAYS HIS MAIN CONCERN IS THE FAILURE OF ISRAEL TO RESPOND TO HIM IN THE SPIRIT OF HIS INITIATIVE.

5. I SAID I HAD PUT TO SADAT BEGIN'S PROPOSAL FOR RE-CONVENING THE POLITICAL COMMITTEE AND I HAD EXPLAINED THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT'S FEELING REGARDING THE LACK OF SYMMETRY AND THE INEQUALITY CREATED BY THE DIFFERING STATUS OF THE POLITICAL AND MILITARY COMMITTEES. SADAT'S RESPONSE HAD NOT BEEN CLEAR CUT. ON THE ONE HAND, HE SAID HE HAD NO OBJECTION TO CONTINUING THE WORK OF BOTH COMMITTEES. ON THE OTHER HAND, HE SAW NO POINT IN RE-

CONVENING UNLESS THIS WERE DONE IN THE SPIRIT OF HIS
CONCEPT OF GETTING DIRECTLY TO SUBSTANCE. SADAT SEEMED
TO BE SAYING HE HAD NO OBJECTION IN PRINCIPLE TO RECON-
VENING, BUT SAW NO POINT IN IT UNLESS THERE WAS SOME
PROSPECT FOR A BREAKTHROUGH. I SAID I COULD NOT BE MORE
PRECISE THAN THAT BECAUSE SADAT WAS NOT MORE PRECISE.

6. BEGIN ASKED ABOUT MY TALK WITH KAMEL. I SAID I
WOULD SUMMARIZE WHAT I HAD TOLD THE FOREIGN MINISTER
ON SATURDAY EVENING. I BEGAN MY TALK WITH KAMEL BY
GIVING A DESCRIPTION OF MY MEETINGS IN ISRAEL AND
EMPHASIZING THAT I HAD FOUND A SERIOUS DESIRE ON THE
PART OF THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT TO CONTINUE THE WORK ON
THE DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES. KAMEL HAD SAID EGYPT
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SHARES THIS DESIRE. WE DISCUSSED THE DECLARATION OF
PRINCIPLES AT LENGTH AND KAMEL GAVE ME THE EGYPTIAN
TEXT WHICH I PRESENTED TO DAYAN SATURDAY EVENING.
I SAID WITH KAMEL I ALSO DISCUSSED THE VARIOUS INTERPRE-
TATIONS OF THE ISSUE OF APPLICABILITY OF THE WITHDRAWAL
PROVISIONS OF RESOLUTION 242 TO ALL FRONTS. I EXPLAINED
THAT THIS PROBLEM IS OF INTEREST TO THE EGYPTIANS BECAUSE
THEY SEE IN IT IMPLICATIONS FOR THE NEXT ITEM ON THE
POLITICAL AGENDA, I.E. FUTURE OF THE WEST BANK
AND GAZA. I NOTED, HOWEVER, THAT THERE IS SOME
RELUCTANCE ON EGYPT'S PART TO GET UNILATERALLY INTO DISCUSSION OF
THE FUTURE OF THE WEST BANK AND GAZA. I HAD URGED THE EGYPTIAN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, CAT-C, NEGOTIATIONS, PEACE PLANS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 27 feb 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978JERUSA00002
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X1
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: N780003-0124
Format: TEL
From: JERUSALEM
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 2
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780210/aaaaahtu.tel
Line Count: 148
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 2db9cdcc-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NODS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: NODIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 22 jun 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3425398
Secure: LOCK1
Status: NATIVE
Subject: STANTIVE ISSUES. HE REPEATED OVER AND OVER AGAIN THAT THE SPIRIT OF HIS VISIT TO JERUSALEM HAD STILL NOT BEEN UNDERSTOOD IN ISRAEL. BY THIS, HE DID NOT MEAN TH
TAGS: PDEV, PBOR, IS, EG, XF
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/2db9cdcc-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014